



School Leavers'

Handbook

2022-23

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Congratulations on completing your School Education!

A Message from Dan

I was elected to Federal Parliament as the Member for Hunter earlier this year. I live locally and my wife and I are raising our daughters, who attend a local public school.

Finishing school is an exciting opportunity for you to consider your prospects.

This handbook aims to provide you with information about important aspects of life after school. It is designed as a starting point to make the transition to work or study easier.

In this handbook you will find information on:

- Education and training
- Tips on finding employment
- Seeking financial assistance
- Applying for essentials such as Medicare, a Tax File Number and enrolling to vote.

I wish you every success for the future.

Kind Regards



Dan Repacholi MP
Federal Member for Hunter



Choosing what
to do in your
post-school
life is exciting
but also
challenging.



Introduction

The best way to succeed when planning for your future is to identify your interests. There are lots of people and organisations that can help you choose something that interests you. Finding out what your strengths and weaknesses are is the best way to identify what pathway best suits you.

www.myfuture.edu.au and www.dese.gov.au/school-work-transitions are excellent resources to help you identify your interests and strengths. They provide an in-depth look at a range of occupations and the requirements needed to pursue those jobs.

Education and Training



University

University offers a wide range of tertiary education courses. Entrance into university is usually based on your performance in Year 12. Checking requirements for courses should be a priority before submitting your application through the University Admissions Centre (UAC). Your school can also assist you with this.

When selecting a course, consider the following:

- What am I interested in?
- Which program will allow me to study this?
- Where do I want to study?
- Am I prepared to move away from home?
- How flexible is my course?
- Can I complete my course part-time?

It's important to remember that regardless of the final mark you receive, consider a course that best suits your interests; this will deliver satisfaction as well as better success.

If your circumstances change, speak to your course coordinator to consider the options that are available. You may be able to change your degree and even look at changing from full-time to part-time studies. Just remember different courses can have different requirements.

For help on deciding which course is right for you, or to check which courses are on offer, visit www.studyassist.gov.au

Be sure to check out the open days and handbooks of the individual universities. They provide useful information and can assist in directing you to finding a course that best suits you. Sometimes it may even lead you to a course that you might not have previously considered.

University Admission Centre (UAC)

If you intend to apply for University in either NSW or ACT, you must submit an application through UAC To apply through UAC, you will need a UAC application number and PIN. Once you have logged into the UAC portal, you can begin your application .

Applying students can select up to nine preferences. Be sure to put the course you want to do first. The main round of offers occurs in late January If you do not receive an offer in the first round there is always a chance you will receive an offer in the subsequent rounds.

For further information regarding the application process and accepting offers, visit www.uac.edu.au

Higher Education Loan Program (HELP)

The Australian Government assists eligible students by providing access to the Higher Education Loan Program The HELP scheme offers different loans for different types of study so students can study now and pay the tuition costs later.

For more information on the HELP Scheme, visit www.studyassist.gov.au/help-loans

University of Newcastle (UON)

The University of Newcastle (UON) is our region's largest university. Campus locations include Newcastle City, Callaghan, Central Coast and Sydney as well as online and distance programs.

UON is a world-class university with a strong focus on student experience, excellence in teaching, and research.

For a full list of courses available at UON, visit www.newcastle.edu.au/degrees

Avondale University (Avondale)

Located in South Western Lake Macquarie, Avondale University (Avondale) is a leading not-for-profit provider of tertiary education, offering a range of undergraduate, postgraduate and vocational courses in a nurturing and inclusive environment.

Avondale offers undergraduate, postgraduate and vocational (VET) courses across Arts, Business, Teaching, Nursing, Ministry and Theology and Outdoor Leadership. Avondale also has research centres leading the way in Lifestyle and Health; Christian Education; Scripture, Spirituality and Society; and Teaching and Learning.

You can find all the information on the courses available at the Avondale campus at www.avondale.edu.au/courses

There are a range of other Universities throughout the country. You can find more information on the UAC website and be sure to check the specific University's website for their courses and handbook for the latest course information.



TAFE

TAFE offers a wide range of study options from online courses, to training and full-time education. Vocational Education and Training (VET) will equip you with the necessary and practical skills needed for employment. It is also a good option to consider if you want to go to University but need to gain entrance qualifications or be more prepared before you start your degree. TAFE courses can range from a few weeks up to a few years.

Unlike University, TAFE and Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) do not require a specific ATAR mark to be accepted, although some courses may have prerequisites.

For more information on TAFE courses, visit www.tafensw.edu.au/courses or call **131 601**.

You can also speak to your school Careers Advisor for details on what VET courses are available and how to apply.

Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)

Registered Training Organisations are training providers who are registered to deliver VET courses. They provide training and qualifications that are nationally recognised. RTOs offer qualifications at the following levels: Certificate I, II, III and IV, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma.

For more information on RTO courses, visit www.education.nsw.gov.au/skills-nsw or call **13 28 11**.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are available to anyone of working age. You don't need a secondary school certificate or other qualification to be able to do an apprenticeship.

Apprenticeships offer opportunities for you to train, study and earn an income at a variety of qualification levels in most occupations, as well as in traditional trades.

For more information, visit www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au or call **13 38 73**.

**You can speak
to your school
Careers Advisor
for details on
what courses
are available
and how to
apply.**



A well-written
resume is
a key part
of any job
application



Employment

Resume

One of the first things you need before applying for a job is a resume or curriculum vitae (CV). A well-written resume is a key part of any job application that lists your study, work and life experiences.

The purpose of a resume is to convince employers to interview you.

Your resume should include some, or all, of the following information:

- Personal Details
- Education Details
- Work or Volunteering Experiences
- Awards or Certificates
- Interests and Hobbies
- References

Handy tips before sending your resume:

- Make sure it's typed on plain A4 paper
- Double-check your spelling and details
- Ask someone to proof-read your resume and job application
- Create a portfolio of your work (or photographs of it) when applying for jobs that require artistic ability

The Interview

This can be an intimidating process but try to relax during the interview as much as possible.

You should show enthusiasm for the company and the type of work you will be expected to do. It will help you to do some homework about the company if you can. Having knowledge of things such as what the company does, and the position you are applying for, will also make a favourable impression on a prospective employer.

Examples of questions an employer might ask:

- Why do you think you are suitable for this position?
- Why would you like to work for this company?
- What do you know about this organisation?
- Why did you apply for this job?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Why do you think we should employ you?
- Tell me about a problem you had and how you solved it.
- Give me an example of a time where you successfully worked in a team.

It often helps to practice your answers before an interview. Ask a friend, teacher or parent to role-play an interview with you.

For guidance on writing a resume and cover letter and preparing for interviews, visit www.jobjumpstart.gov.au

Rights at Work

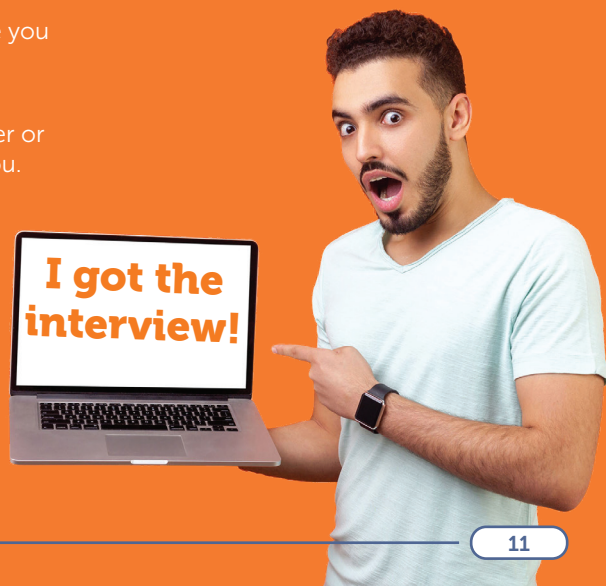
If you are leaving school and are heading straight for the workforce, it is vital you understand your rights as a worker.

The best place to find answers to the most common questions about your rights at work is the Guide for Young Workers on the Fair Work website (see details below). This guide is useful for students transitioning from school to work or working part-time while studying.

The Fair Work Ombudsman can offer useful information such as the minimum rate of pay you should be entitled to and the conditions of employment for your job. The Fair Work Ombudsman also has the power to investigate if required.

Fair Work Ombudsman:
www.fairwork.gov.au

Guide for Young Workers: www.fairwork.gov.au/find-help-for/young-workers-and-students



Superannuation

Superannuation is money set aside during your working life for when you retire. Superannuation begins when you start work and your employer starts paying a portion of your salary or wages into your superannuation for you.

You can choose between a superannuation fund that manages your super for you or you can set up your own Self-Managed Superannuation Fund (SMSF). They may also offer different types of insurance, such as income protection.

You should provide your Tax File Number (TFN) to your employer and/or superannuation fund. If you don't, your superannuation fund may take extra tax out of your super contributions and will not be able to accept any non-employer contributions.

For information on Superannuation, visit www.ato.gov.au/individuals/super

Tax File Number (TFN)

Your tax file number (TFN) is your personal reference number in the tax and superannuation systems. Your TFN is an important part of your tax and superannuation records as well as your identity, so keep it secure. Your TFN is yours for life. You keep the same TFN even if you change your name, change jobs, move interstate or go overseas.

You don't have to have a TFN, but without one you pay more tax. You also won't be able to apply for government benefits, lodge your tax return electronically or get an Australian Business Number (ABN).

You can obtain your TFN while still in school through your Careers Advisor. If you did not receive a TFN at school, don't worry, you can apply for a TFN at any time.

To apply for a TFN, visit www.ato.gov.au/individuals/tax-file-number/apply-for-a-tfn

Unions

Throughout Australia's history, unions have given working people a voice in their workplaces and in broader society.

Unions provide advice and assistance in a range of work-related matters. Unions represent workers to protect their rights, conditions and wages. Joining a Union will assist you with negotiating better wages and conditions in your workplace, represent you in workplace issues including termination of employment, and they can take further action to make sure your employer is paying you correctly and providing a safe workplace. Union memberships remain confidential, meaning you do not have to disclose your union to your employer or colleagues.

The Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) is the peak National Union Body. You can join a union that suits you through the ACTU's website at www.actu.org.au or call **1300 486 466**.



Students with Disabilities



NDIS Participants

The School Leaver Employment Support (SLES) is a new NDIS support which may help you.

SLES is about giving you the skills and confidence to help you move from school to employment. It offers individualised support for up to two years after finishing Year 12 to help you get ready for work and plan your pathway to employment.

For more information, visit www.ndis.gov.au/participants/finding-keeping-and-changing-jobs

Disability Employment Services

Disability Employment Services (DES) is the Australian Government's employment service that helps people with disability find work and keep a job.

Jobseekers can access DES either through referral by Services Australia - generally for those receiving Centrelink payments - or by directly registering with a DES provider of their choice.

Visit www.jobaccess.gov.au/find-a-provider to find a DES provider.

JobAccess

JobAccess is the national hub for workplace and employment information for people with a disability, employers and service providers. Created by the Australian Government, it brings together the information and resources that can 'drive disability employment'.

For further information visit, www.jobaccess.gov.au or call the advice line on **1800 464 800**.

Indigenous Youth and Employment



Indigenous Employment

The Wollotuka Institute has operated as a support centre for Indigenous students studying at the University of Newcastle with unparalleled leadership who champion an academically enriching and culturally affirming education.

The Wollotuka Institute are at the cutting edge of Indigenous education, student recruitment, student support and offer an academic program to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. They draw strength from culture, communities and past journeys.

Their work has seen them forge a reputation as a leader in Indigenous education in Australia and they continue to play a pivotal role in leading self-determination and social justice.

Visit www.newcastle.edu.au/our-uni/indigenous-collaboration/the-wollotuka-institute for more information

ABSTUDY- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Study Scheme

ABSTUDY provides means-tested living allowance and other supplementary benefits to eligible secondary and tertiary students. ABSTUDY can assist with your study costs and housing if you need to travel to study.

For more information, visit www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/abstudy or call the ABSTUDY Hotline on **1800 132 317**.

Indigenous Employment

The Australian Government offers a large range of employment programs and assistance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

For more information about programs, payments and services, you can call the Centrelink Indigenous Call Centre on **1800 136 380**.



Financial Assistance

Youth Allowance

Youth Allowance is financial help from Services Australia if you're 24 or younger and a student or Australian Apprentice, or 21 or younger and looking for work.

To get Youth Allowance as a student or an Australian Apprentice you must be under 24 years of age and be completing an approved course or full-time Australian Apprenticeship. You must also satisfy an income test and meet the parental means test.

To get Youth Allowance as a job seeker you must be under 21 years of age and looking for full-time work or studying part-time and looking for work or temporarily unable to work.

For more information visit;
Youth Allowance for Students
and Australian Apprentices
[www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/
youth-allowance-for-students-
and-australian-apprentices](http://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/youth-allowance-for-students-and-australian-apprentices)

Youth Allowance for Job Seekers
[www.servicesaustralia.gov.
au/youth-allowance-for-job-
seekers](http://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/youth-allowance-for-job-seekers)

Health

Medicare

Medicare is Australia's universal healthcare system. It helps Australians with the cost of their healthcare by paying for some or all of the costs for visits to the doctor or to the hospital. When you go to any health professional (such as a doctor, specialist, optometrist) or a public hospital or if you get prescription medicine from the chemist, you will need to show your Medicare card.

If you're on your parent's Medicare card, you're already enrolled. This means you don't need to re-enrol. When you're 15 years old, you can get your own Medicare card.

For information on how to enrol in Medicare or to transfer to your own card, visit www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/medicare-card



COVID-19

The COVID Pandemic continues to impact the lives of Australians, especially young people.

As we get back to normal, seeing friends and family, moving on transport and travelling, it is very important we consider our health and those around us.

Speaking to a healthcare professional is the best way to start a conversation about vaccination and other health needs.

For more information visit www.headspace.org.au

You can also contact

Headspace Newcastle

(02) 4929 4201

email

headspacenewcastle@hunterprimarycare.com.au

Headspace Cessnock

(02) 4993 3450

email

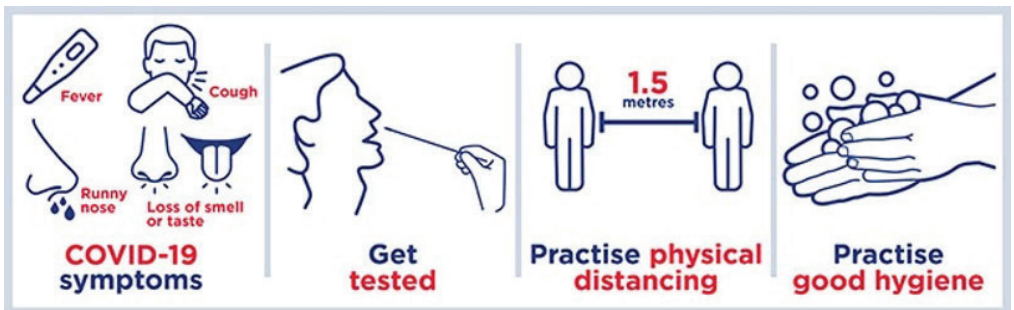
headspacecessnock@samaritans.org.au

Headspace Maitland

(02) 4931 1000

email

headspacemaitland@samaritans.org.au



Community



Federal Government

Raises money through taxing incomes, spending and businesses.



State Government

Receives more than half of their money from the Federal Government and also collects taxes.



Local Councils

Collects taxes (rates) from all local property owners and receives money from Federal and State Governments.



The Three Levels of Government

In Australia there are three levels of Government.

Local Councils are responsible for building regulations, development applications, community facilities, roads, parks, recreational facilities and waste management.

State Governments are responsible for police, transport, hospitals, schools and social housing.

Federal Government is responsible for defence, immigration, foreign affairs, trade, communication services like Australia Post and NBN, taxation and many other things.

As your representative in the Federal Parliament, if you have a question or enquiries about Federal Government matters, please don't hesitate to contact me or my office via email at Dan.Repacholi.MP@aph.gov.au or call (02) 4991 1022.

Let your
voice
be heard



Voting

Voting in Australia is compulsory by law for all eligible Australian citizens. It is also your opportunity to determine who you would like to be your representative. If you are 16 or 17 years old, you can enrol now so once you turn 18, you will be able to vote.

To enrol to vote, you will need to visit the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) website.

- 1 Visit www.aec.gov.au/enrol
- 2 Complete the online enrolment form, print it out and sign it.
- 3 Mail your form to the AEC.

You can also upload a scan of your enrolment form on www.aec.gov.au/enrol/send-form.htm or send a fax. You can also find your local AEC office on the above website. Remember, if you move address, you will need to update your enrolment with the AEC.

If you are not sure if you are enrolled, visit www.aec.gov.au/check or call **13 23 26**.

Volunteering

Volunteering is an extremely satisfying way to repay the community in which you live. Potential employers also regard volunteering roles highly as it shows a dedication to your community and your willingness to give back.

There are many volunteering opportunities available, depending on how much time you have. Some volunteering may give you the skills to enhance your ability to participate in the work force.

For more information about volunteering, visit NSW Volunteering at www.volunteering.nsw.gov.au





Useful Contacts

Emergency (Police, Fire, Ambulance)

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Police Assistance Line (non-urgent)	131 444
John Hunter Hospital	4921 3000
Singleton Hospital	6571 9222
Muswellbrook Hospital	6542 2000
Cessnock Hospital	4991 0555
Belmont Hospital	4923 2000
Maitland Hospital	4087 1000
State Emergency Service	132 500
Poisons Information Centre	131 126
Lifeline	13 11 14
Mental Health Line	1800 011 511
Headspace (Newcastle)	4929 4201
Beyondblue	1300 224 636
Medicare	132 011
National Disability Insurance Agency	1800 800 110
JobAccess	1800 464 800
ABSTUDY	1800 132 317
Youth Allowance	132 490
Australian Taxation Office (ATO)	132 865
Universities Admission Centre	9752 020
Skills NSW	13 28 11
TAFE NSW	131 601
Australian Apprenticeships	13 38 73
Fair Work Ombudsman	131 394
Australian Council of Trade Unions	1300 486 466
Hunter Community Legal Centre	4040 9120
Hunter Tenants Advice & Advocacy Service	4969 7666
Australian Electoral Commission	132 326
Transport Infoline	131 500

Councils

Muswellbrook	6549 3700
Singleton	6578 7290
Cessnock	4993 4100
Lake Macquarie	4921 0333

State Members of Parliament

Sonia Horner MP – Member for Wallsend	4950 0955
Clayton Barr MP – Member for Cessnock	4991 1466
Greg Piper MP – Member for Lake Macquarie	4959 3200
Dave Layzell MP – Member for Upper Hunter	6543 1065



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